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ABSTRACT

This review of five recent (1992 and 1993) books and journal articles is intended to illuminate characteristics of inclusive schools. The review defines inclusion as more than merely regular class placement for students with disabilities, to include a philosophy which celebrates diversity and the provision of a continuum of educational options. The following publications are reviewed: "Curriculum Considerations in Inclusive Classrooms" (Susan Stainback and William Stainback); "Inclusive Practices Transform Special Education in the 1990s" (Richard Schattman and Jeff Benay); "Helping Teachers Manage the Inclusive Classroom" (Barbara Ayres and Luanna H. Meyer); "Co-Teaching: An Overview of the Past, a Glimpse at the Present, and Considerations for the Future" (Marilyn Friend, Monica Reisling, and Lynne Cook); and "Co-Assessment of Special Learners: A Call for Special and General Education To Unite" (Joyce S. Choate). (DB)

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Inclusive Schools

Judy Schrag and Jane Burnette

Educational reform challenges schools, particularly those serving students with disabilities, to focus on the philosophy that *all* students can not only learn, but that they can learn at higher levels. *Inclusion* is the term used to describe this controversial concept, which represents different things to different people. For example, many people view inclusion as requiring schools to educate *all* students with disabilities in regular classes, no matter how intensive the services they require.

For this review, inclusion is defined as an educational context and process that amounts to more than regular class placement for students with disabilities; inclusive schools implement a philosophy of coordination that celebrates diversity and maintain a continuum of educational options to provide choice and meet the needs of individual children.

Within inclusive schools, there is a sense of community that values the abilities of all students, understands their limitations, and provides opportunities for them to develop a strong sense of self-worth, concern, and respect for others, as well as the ability to work interdependently. Inclusive schools forge strong ties with their communities and embrace parents as equal partners.

In inclusive schools, students work in flexible learning environments, with flexible curricula and instruction that are accessible to all. Students work toward the same educational outcomes; what differs is the level at which these outcomes are achieved and the degree of emphasis placed on them.

Teachers in inclusive schools work together to implement strategies that maximize the learning of all students. These strategies include cooperative learning, curriculum adaptation, peer-mediated learning approaches, collaborative and team teaching, direct instruction, and reciprocal teaching, as well as innovative forms of accountability and assessment.

The following reviews illuminate some of the characteristics of inclusive schools.

Stainback, Susan, and William Stainback (Eds.). **Curriculum Considerations in Inclusive Classrooms.** Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes, 1992. 275 pages, $25.

This book brings together a number of prominent authors to discuss classroom and curriculum strategies for supporting an inclusive school environment. In their introductory chapter, the Stainbacks propound a school culture that emphasizes community, mutual support, and celebration of differences.

In their view, schools are presently structured to meet the needs of only "normal" students, and are

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facing problems that are due at least in part to an increasingly complex and depersonalized society. The Stainbacks cite the advantages of inclusive schools and present strategies for inclusion, ranging from classroom philosophies to accommodations, and from task forces to support facilitators.

Subsequent chapters describe other approaches and strategies to make inclusion work. *Mara Sapin-Shevin* explains how the curriculum can acknowledge and address the many ways that students differ in culture, religion, gender, skills and abilities, and family life.

Alison Ford, Linda Davern, and Roberta Schnorr describe techniques for creating a productive classroom climate and a unified, whole-class curriculum that incorporates such special needs as scheduling, instructional approaches, testing, and creating a cooperative and affirmative atmosphere.

The Stainbacks and *Jeanette Moravec* note that schools that have successfully included students with disabilities have first focused on acceptance, friendships, and feelings of belonging and self-worth. The authors criticize traditional, preset, sequenced curricula and suggest strategies for planning and implementing a more flexible and adaptable curriculum.

Janet L. Graden and Anne M. Bauer discuss a collaborative approach to support teachers and students in inclusive classrooms, while *Jennifer York, Michael F. Giangreco, Terri Vandercook, and Cathy Macdonald* remind us that no one person can meet all student needs in a heterogeneous classroom. Resource, moral, technical, and evaluation support may be needed, and collaboration is necessary to decide on the extent and type of the most effective support.

Richard A. Villa and Jacqueline S. Thousand discuss techniques for involving students in determining the form and content of their instruction, which they feel enhances motivation and achievement. The techniques include teaching teams with student members, peer tutoring, cooperative group learning, and teacher-student team teaching.

Wade Hintzing describes positive teaching strategies and interventions, *Diane L. Ferguson and Lysa A. Jeanchild* tell us how to implement curricular decisions, and *Brian Cullen and Theresa Pratt* examine new methods of measuring and reporting student progress.

Jeff Strully, Barb Buswell, Leslie New, Cindy Strully, and Beth Schaffner look at measuring the quality of schooling from the parents' perspective, while *Michael Peterson, Barbara LeRoy, Sharon Field, and Paula Wood* present approaches to community-referenced learning, and *Mary Falvey, Jennifer Coots, and Susann Terry-Gage* champion extracurricular activities.

In conclusion, *Michael F. Giangreco* discusses curricular trends, issues, challenges, and solutions in curriculum-oriented schools.

Schattman, Richard, and Jeff Benay. **"Inclusive Practices Transform Special Education in the 1990s."** *The School Administrator* 49:2 (February 1992): 8-12.

In this article, Schattman and Benay discuss full inclusion and describe the fundamental changes that schools and districts have undertaken to implement it. They trace the history of special education reform from the 1954 Supreme Court decision that abolished racial segregation and set the stage for emerging concerns about segregated education for students with disabilities.

In response to the belief that segregated education denies students with disabilities an equal educational opportunity, many schools in the U.S. and Canada now use full inclusionary models in which all children, regardless of the type or severity of their disabilities, are fully educated in regular classes.

These schools are using team approaches to planning, problem solving, and program implementation that change the traditional roles of administrators, teachers, and parents. The use of teaming strategies has fundamentally changed how they operate, make decisions, deliver instruction, and relate to each other. Team-based management provides them with a more holistic view of the system, in which members are linked interdependently.

Administrators in these schools no longer make unilateral decisions about resource allocation. Instead, they engage in such activities as supervising and evaluating staff; encouraging teams to think about mission and philosophy as they make decisions; implementing needed changes, such as modifying schedules and revising job descriptions; setting agendas for staff meetings; and arranging for staff inservice training.

Classroom teachers in these schools provide di-

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rect instruction, consult with other team members, supervise paraprofessionals, coordinate related services, and help to train colleagues. Special education teachers co-teach with classroom teachers; share in the training, support, and supervision of paraprofessionals; and participate as equal members with parents, classroom teachers, and administrators on school teams.

Schattman and Benay cite many benefits of inclusive education: Children with disabilities become meaningful members of the community; teachers have greater input into decision making; administrators are linked with teachers and parents as team members; and parents have an opportunity to develop ongoing relationships with school professionals.

Ayres, Barbara, and Luanna H. Meyer. **"Helping Teachers Manage the Inclusive Classroom."** *The School Administrator* 49:2 (February 1992): 30-37.

Ayres and Meyer believe that teacher education must become more responsive to societal changes and that the movement toward inclusion, combined with increased attention to cultural diversity, can make school a place of personal growth and cultural enrichment for everyone.

Special educators can contribute to a "technology of individualization" with skills that include assessing student learning styles and academic skill levels, identifying social and behavioral needs, and organizing teams around individualized plans. This technology can be extremely valuable in regular education classrooms, particularly if its resources can be made readily available to any child at risk, regardless of labels. But to make this contribution, special education must become part of a unified educational system that will better accommodate diverse student needs.

Ayres and Meyer feel that in preparing children to be tomorrow's citizens, schools should make the achievement of social and emotional goals as explicit as academic expectations. They cite such innovations as cooperative learning, whole language approaches, and interdisciplinary teaching, implemented by task forces and team structures, as helping students see the relevance of school to their own needs.

The authors believe that teacher education programs should model the innovations that researchers promote for inclusive schools. If teachers are expected to incorporate diversity into their practices, teacher educators must do the same. Course sequences should be designed to demonstrate the principles and practices of inclusion now evidenced in our schools.

Since many of today's teachers did not experience cooperative grouping when they were in school, they must be provided with the inservice training, support, and practice they require to master collaborative teaming

Friend, Marilyn; Monica Reisling; and Lynne Cook. **"Co-Teaching: An Overview of the Past, a Glimpse at the Present, and Considerations for the Future."** *Preventing School Failure* 37:4 (Summer 1993): 6-10.

The authors feel that co-teaching holds great promise as a way to meet the needs of students with disabilities in general education classrooms. However, since there is not yet enough research to show that co-teaching is more effective than other delivery models, they recommend that it be explored with caution.

An offshoot of team teaching, co-teaching between classroom and special education teachers involves shared responsibility for planning, delivering, and evaluating instruction. Today, it is most often practiced with students who have mild disabilities or when there is a cluster of students with special needs in a particular class. It is used most often in elementary schools, less in middle schools, and even less in junior high and high schools.

Most co-teachers prefer to establish a schedule and select a particular time period or subject to co-teach. The amount of co-teaching in any class depends on the number of students with disabilities and the intensity of their needs. The two teachers may share an active role in instructing the whole class, with both participating in discussions or demonstrations, or they may take turns, one leading whole-group classes while the other observes or assists.

There are also small-group options, such as parallel group instruction, in which the teachers plan instruction jointly and each teaches half the class. Another option is to set up classroom teaching stations, with each teacher responsible for part of the instructional content and all students eventually participating at all stations. In alternative teaching, one teacher works with a small group of students to preteach, reteach, supplement, or enrich while the other instructs the larger group.

The authors feel that future use of co-teaching will depend in part on how well educators solve the associated management issues, such as resource allocation, school scheduling and space allocation, co-teaching assignments, and classroom management. Because co-teaching is labor- and time-intensive, requiring a high level of commitment and coordination, educators must justify the costs of teacher time for instruction and planning, as well as any additional classroom space that is required, by ensuring that the

instruction provided is not only different but more effective than that offered in other classrooms.

Choate, Joyce S. **"Co-Assessment of Special Learners: A Call for Special and General Education to Unite."** *Preventing School Failure* 37:4 (Summer 1993): 11-15.

Choate believes that it is essential for special and general education teachers to unite if they are to provide meaningful assessment, and that such co-assessment should be facilitated by supervisors and master teachers through leadership and inservice training. The author also feels that general and special education programs should be unified in teacher training institutions.

Special education teachers typically use assessment to identify specific skills to teach or reteach, to gauge progress toward individualized education program goals, and to collect data for special services eligibility. In co-assessment procedures with general educators, they can contribute knowledge of how to assess performance of specific skills; an understanding of error analysis; clinical observation skills; and experience in documenting and tracking specific performances.

General educators typically use assessments for more global purposes—planning, teaching, and evaluating educational outcomes, and making curriculum or administrative decisions. They may use test scores to decide when to reteach a curriculum unit, to grade students for progress reports, and to screen students before referrals for special service evaluation. They bring their knowledge of the scope, sequence, depth, and breadth of the curriculum to the co-assessment process, as well as their expertise in group data collection, experience in documenting and tracking general performance, and an understanding of how to compare student achievement to peer and local norms.

Choate identifies areas in which co-assessment would be particularly advantageous. For example, teachers can work together to analyze new assessment formats and their supporting literature, work out strategies for effective computer use, avoid duplication of effort, and identify formats and procedures that yield information useful to both teachers. In addition, curriculum alignment could be a focus of joint planning, while error analysis could be a key element of collaborative interpretation. □

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